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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wilderness issue on MT Lemmon MTB trails in AZ.

Dear Erin:

I was notified today of the potential for the Samaniego Ridge and the East Catalina areas to be designated as Wilderness.

I feel that this is un-necessary and would limit opportunity for recreation in the area. I am an avid offroad cyclist, and plan to trails in that area on an upcoming vacation.

These trails are unique, spectacular, and provide a very specific mountain biking experience, an experience that is NOT available on other trails in the Tucson region.

If the designation for Wilderness is approved, these trails would no longer be open to mountain bike enthusiasts. The Tucson area is home to many cyclists, and this potential wilderness designation would prohibit many of the area's residents from recreating in this beautiful area.

It would also limit out of town cyclists like me from coming to your area with my vacation rental and dining out dollars. I would skip past Tucson and go to Sedona or Flagstaff.

Tucson is currently a Gold Level Bicycling city, a designation given by the American League of Bicyclists. It is well known that Tucson is trying to achieve the highest level designation, the Platinum Level. One of the criteria for that designation is for the area to have open access to all levels of mountain biking, as well as road biking. By cutting off mountain bike access in the East Catalina and the Samaniego Ridge areas, this could detrimentally effect the application for the Platinum Level status.

Please, DO NOT make this area another Wilderness area. There are enough Wilderness areas in the Tucson region, and we need open areas to recreate in.

eric aldinger  
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